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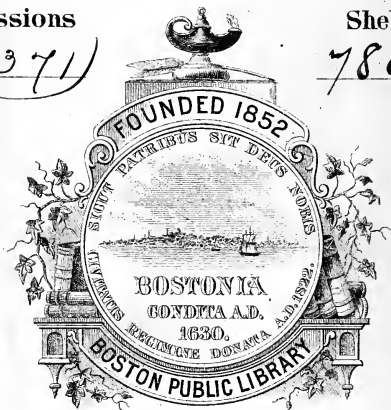
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# HYDROPATHY DEFENDED BY FACTS;

OR THE

## COLD WATER CURE

SHOWN TO BE

AS SAFE IN PRACTICE AS IT IS RATIONAL  
IN THEORY.

ILLUSTRATED BY SEVERAL RECENT AND  
WELL-AUTHENTICATED CASES.

BY

A. COURTNEY, SURGEON, R.N.

RAMSGATE.

"Who, ever, by the most cogent arguments, will be prevailed with to disrobe himself at once of all his old opinions and pretences to knowledge and learning which, with hard study he hath all his time been labouring for, and turn himself out stark-naked, in quest afresh of new notions? All the arguments that can be used will be as little able to prevail, as the wind was with the traveller to part with his cloak, which he held only the faster."—LOCKE.

"Whoever shall move one step beyond the line of the world's conventions, must expect to meet with the thundering anathemas and obloquies of all who wish to stand well with the arbiters of public opinion."—BENTHAM.

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LONDON:

C. GILPIN, 5, BISHOPSGATE-STREET WITHOUT.  
NORTHAMPTON: WESTBROOK AND ISAAC.

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## PREFACE.

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ABOUT twelve months since, I published a little work entitled “The Water Cure ; its safety and rationality,” which was well received, and obtained considerable circulation.

Many of those who were pleased to communicate to the author their conviction of the justness of the principles it advocated, have expressed a strong desire that in the next Edition, the correctness of those principles, as borne out by *practice*, should be shown, by a detail of some of the cases which have occurred since the opening of my Establishment.

To such, as well as to all readers, who may be desirous of gaining some general information on the subject, the following pamphlet, containing

a brief history of a few of the cases which have lately been under my care, will, I trust, prove in some measure satisfactory ; it being observed, that none are mentioned but those in which I have full permission to refer to the patients for the particulars.

As the little work above alluded to is nearly out of print, I have thought it desirable to incorporate with the present the opinions therein advanced ;—opinions, the correctness of which my experience since has tested and proved.

*Ramsgate,*  
*November, 1843.*

# HYDROPATHY

DEFENDED BY FACTS.

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THAT diseases and death, in their most appalling forms, meet us on every hand, is a fact of such daily occurrence, that their existence can be no more doubted, than that of our own. While however, we admit, as admit we must, the truth of this fact, it seems but reasonable to put the question, "Are the causes which give rise to these states within our control, or are they, as some would have us believe, inflictions of Providence, and, in consequence, entirely beyond human control? The decision of every observant and intelligent man, must at once be in favour of the position, that health and length of days are very much in our own power. The quantity and quality of our diet, the avoidance of unwholesome air, habits of early rising, regular exercise, and frequent ablutions of the body, are all within our reach; and yet to the non-observance of these cardinal rules, may, if we except contagious, epidemic, hereditary and accidental disorders, be attributed nearly the whole catalogue of diseases

to which human flesh is liable. Nay, many of those very disorders which we except, might, under a system of strict temperance, be warded off, while others (hereditary diseases for example) would scarcely have appeared amongst us, but from the intemperance of our ancestors. The moment we lose sight of nature, that moment commences disturbance in some of the functions by which health is maintained; and so long as we continue aliens to nature, so long do we sap and undermine the constitution; and often discover, not till too late, that we have been our own destroyers.

It is inattention to the observance of natural habits, and the cultivation of many bad habits that bring most diseases upon us; and to re-establish a healthy equilibrium between the different functions, it must be obvious, is the all-important consideration in the majority of such cases.

And now that we have seen to what, in most instances, the cause of bad health may be ascribed, what is the remedy, or what are the remedies indicated? Regular and wholesome food, regular sleep, early rising, occasional perspirations, ablutions, cleanliness, pure air, and exercise, &c., will, if duly persevered in, almost invariably bring a return of health and strength; and these in the aggregate constitute Hydropathy. Hydropathy, then, may be defined the art of living according to nature, whose principle (nature has but one principle of right) we have violated; from which violation spring nearly

all the evils that assail us. To proclaim therefore that Hydropathy (or temperance, in the strict sense of the word), is a paramount remedy for the evils brought on through intemperance, is merely to urge that which has been urged by every moralist and writer on the subject, from the remotest antiquity ; but which has notwithstanding been attended to by but a very small number of men. All indeed acknowledge that early rising, temperance in eating and drinking, &c. are excellent ; but so long as what is termed the world's opinion retains the paramount influence which it at present does, in vain will the physician and the moralist urge their importance. Men in general will go on as they have done ; and the greater number of those who change will conform but in part, and leave the real laws of nature untried, or tried but partially, and consequently very unsuccessfully. Were I to hold out the prospect of the re-establishment of health, by the adoption of the world's temperance, (temperance consisting in the moderate use of intoxicating liquors—a manifestly improper term ; for the use of any thing injurious is its abuse, and no medical man who regards his character will, in the present day, argue that they are not injurious to persons in health ;\* and many

\* That they are not only unnecessary but injurious to persons in health, the "Decisive Testimony of Eminent Medical Men," published by the New British and Foreign Temperance Society, testifies. And though two or three

consider them unnecessary even as a medicine),\* were I, I say, to hold out the prospect of health from such temperance as the term implies in the present day, I should, instead of advocating rules of health derived from nature, be supporting the most unwarrantable departure from them, and affording a sanction to the all but general relinquishment of the reality for the appearance of health. I sanction no such temperance as the mongrel temperance of which I have been speaking, and those persons who confide themselves to my care, shall not, be their opinion what it may, be treated on any but principles in true accordance with nature; principles of which all who conform thereto must experience the benefit. We have, indeed, the testimonies of medical men, clergymen, and ministers, and other persons of the highest respectability, who have visited Graefenberg, and witnessed the extraordinary cures performed by that remarkable man Priessnitz, whose representations it is impossible to doubt. That evidence shews that, humble peasant as he was, he has, by enforcing a temperance of the kind I am advocating, treated many thousand cases of disease of every kind; and of that number, has not only medical men and some ministers have attempted to brand this document as a forgery, I fearlessly assert that its authenticity cannot be invalidated.

\* For proof of this vide the "Important and Conclusive Testimonies," published by Wm. Batchelor, Esq. M. R. C. S. See also Appendix, Note A.

cured several whose diseases had set the best conducted medical treatment at defiance, but has restored to health a greater proportion upon an average, than ever was cured before out of the same number of patients, by any, or by all other means put together. And yet we have medical men ridiculing the system. That Priessnitz's system has been successful beyond all precedent is a fact; and the fact itself is a testimony to the understanding of every rational man, that whatever opinion may be entertained to the contrary, the theory that does not square with his system, (no matter by whom it was first expounded) is erroneous.

But the system, we are told, originated with an illiterate peasant. Is it any thing the worse for that? Is it therefore to be condemned? Let him who thinks it is, read the following from the pen of the most distinguished physician of his day,—Dr. Heberden. “The practice of physic has been more improved by the casual experiments of illiterate nations, and the rash ones of vagabond quacks, than by the reasonings of all the once celebrated professors, and theoretic teachers of it in the several schools of Europe; very few of whom have furnished us with one new medicine, or have taught us better how to use our old ones; or have in any one instance at all improved the art of curing diseases.” It is a truth, however, evidenced every day, that, notwithstanding all our advances in education and civilization, we are

now, as in the times of Galileo, Harvey, and Newton, the bitter opposers of every system that is new; and ready, without knowing any thing of the nature or character of a discovery, to denounce its upholders and abettors. So palpable indeed are our prejudices on such subjects, that there are many, even amongst the lower classes, who notice and ridicule them. There are men, however, who do not pronounce an opinion till they have made themselves acquainted with the subject advanced, or discovery promulgated. Of these I know not one who does not highly value the discovery of Priessnitz. I call his a discovery, because, though there were persons before his day who entertained ideas, that water, properly employed, was an element from which effects the most beneficial might be derived, to Priessnitz alone is due the credit of extending and carrying out those ideas, so as to entitle him to the character of a discoverer. If Harvey or some other person had not demonstrated the circulation of the blood, all the hints and suppositions of his predecessors would have gone for nothing. The like may be said of Priessnitz; if he or some other person had not demonstrated the manifold ways of using and applying cold water, all the hints and suppositions of his predecessors would have gone for nothing also. Each is therefore entitled to the character of a discoverer. *The Edinburgh Medical and Surgical Journal*, (unlike many other reviews,



with whom it is quite sufficient that a new remedy or a new discovery runs counter to the unnatural habits and prejudices of the many, to gain it their condemnation and abuse), has spoken very favourably of Priessnitz's system ; and Dr. Hume Weatherhead, a man of eminence in the profession, who cured himself speedily of an attack of gout by adopting the treatment, uses the following language : "Although the cure by cold water, as has been said, is not new, yet this German peasant (for such Priessnitz was) has, by a natural sagacity, so improved upon the manner of employing it, as not only to divest it of many, *if not all*, of its injurious effects and properties, but greatly to add to its virtues as a remedy." And in another place, "The author is free to confess that he never read any thing on medicine that interested him more earnestly, or which developed views more in accordance with what he has ever considered the true principles of therapeutics, in diseases originating in a contaminated state of the humours, than those embodied in Priessnitz's method of cure." For my own part, I confess that the writings of Hancock, Smith, Floyer, Baynard, Currie and others, and a dispassionate examination of the system, have led me to the opinion, that Priessnitz's practice, however violent and unnatural it may appear to those who have not investigated the subject, and to the millions who have all their lives outraged nature by living in direct opposition

to nature's laws, is based on the soundest and most rational physiological principles. Dr. Macartney, the late professor at Trinity College, Dublin, who is well known as one of the first physiologists in Europe, used to say, "water when its properties and modes of application are well known, will be worth all other remedies put together." The practice of Priessnitz has, I think, verified the doctor's prediction, as the following extract from a letter written by Dr. Behrend, of Berlin (not to mention many equally strong testimonies which could be adduced to the same effect) tends to confirm; and Dr. Behrend, we have the authority of Dr. Hume Weatherhead for stating, is well known as a man distinguished for his learning and judgment :—

"Practitioner as I am of fifteen years standing, and editor for six years of a medical journal, I was at first a little mistrustful of this novelty, and compared it with many others whose authors pretended to reform the medical art, and who have completely vanished. But, Sir, that which I saw with my own eyes at Graefenberg, and other similar establishments, struck me, as it will you, with astonishment. I have seen an old intermittent fever cured by cold water without quinine or any other remedy. I have seen measles, scarlatina, small-pox, nervous fevers, rheumatism, gout, scrofula, tracheitis, and other complaints of the throat, syphilis, tic dolooureux and other nervous

affections, tumours in the glands, swelling of the liver, and all effects of mercury, and many other diseases, cured by simple cold water, without the aid of any other remedy whatever; and in a comparatively shorter time, and a more favourable manner for the constitution, than could have been attained by any other means. Cold water is administered in all diseases, internally and externally; but the method of application is varied according to the individual and the cure. Cold water serves sometimes as a revulsive and sometimes as a depressive agent, and, if you, Sir, had witnessed what I have, you would not doubt any more than myself."

I know it has been said that these are extravagant statements, but it should be recollected, that Dr. Behrend is a man not very likely to exaggerate, and that many very respectable persons—(E. S. Abdy, Esq., M. A., for one) have related cases of cures equally surprising and equally wonderful, which they had witnessed. I have had recently, a case of lip disease and scrofulous ulceration, in which the good effects of the water treatment were almost as extraordinary as any of which I have heard. The patient (a youth from Brighton, —Thomas Hills) when he came to me could not walk across the room without crutches, and he had three ulcers below the knee. The ulcers are now healed, and before he left me, he often walked three and four miles before breakfast with the

greatest ease; and his deformity, which was very great, is considerably less, though I have no hopes that he will recover entirely from the latter. He had moreover a thickening of the periosteum or membrane covering the tibia or shin bone externally at its upper and lower extremity, which has nearly disappeared in the former situation. This patient had been confined in an hospital week after week before he came to me, and was every week *getting worse*. From his arrival at my house he was daily out walking—the first three weeks on crutches, the remainder of the time without them. Mark the difference in the results.

The very aim of Priessnitz's system,—and that aim it is well calculated to accomplish,—is,

1. To ensure re-action, and elicit the blood from those organs or parts in which it is accumulated, or circulating in too great a quantity, to the surface of the body, and to the organs and parts it had deserted

2. To moderate excessive re-action—the re-action of fevers, &c.

3. To remove obstructions, and carry off acriminous and other matters from the alimentary canal, and from the system generally.

4. To change or modify the state of the blood.

5. To substitute healthy for diseased secretions.

6. To give tone and energy to the system generally.

Few diseases, whether of the whole or a part of the body, exist, in which it is not the object of the practitioner to produce one or more of the effects just stated; and that one or all of them can be produced by a judicious use of water, internally taken, and externally applied, and with great safety and certainty, Priessnitz has proved, I think, beyond a matter of doubt. Do we want, for instance, to bring the blood to the surface of the body, or to a particular part? Can any thing effect this with greater certainty than the sweatings and frictions of the hydriatrists? Do we wish to establish permanently an equal balance in the circulation and excitement, and to render the body proof against vicissitudes of climate? What, I ask, is calculated to restore so permanently the one or prevent so effectually the effects of the other, as the cold bath, the frictions, the exercise, &c., which this system enjoins? Is excessive re-action to be moderated? What more effectual, what so safe, as the wet sheet repeated occasionally or frequently, according to the degree of violence of the fever? It is, in fact, a remedy capable of diminishing the activity of the vital power, to almost any extent we wish; and possessing at the same time, a soothing and sedative effect; and hence its great efficacy in fevers, and inflammation.

In the human body, there are two forces constantly in action,—a conservative or vital force, and a destructive or chemical force. These in a

state of health are upon an equilibrium; that is, the force of the one is counterbalanced by that of the other. While, therefore, the one whose office it is to pull down or take to pieces the body is incessantly at work, the other whose office it is to build up, repairs with proportionate celerity; and thus notwithstanding these incessant changes, health is preserved, and animal heat maintained: indeed without them the body could not continue an hour in perfect health; for the particles of which it is composed, are no sooner built up than the destructive force (of oxygen) seizes upon them, and deprives them of vitality. And hence the necessity of their speedy removal, in order to give place to fresh particles, which are constantly moving to take their place;—particles which cannot maintain this healthy momentum after the vital force is, by any cause, deprived of its normal or healthy state. And it is a fact supported by the great Liebig, that the quicker those changes take place, the more energetic is the health,—that is, provided the healthy equilibrium of these forces is still maintained. Now it is a fact also, for which we have the authority of Liebig and of other eminent physiologists of the present day, that by the use of water, we can accelerate greatly this work of destruction and re-production; and that we can also diminish it by the same element to almost any extent we please:—proofs of its great value as a remedial agent, because the production

of one or other effect is just what is wanted in almost every aberration from health ; and hence, with the celebrated Hoffman, we have, in my opinion, a right to conclude that “ pure water is the fittest drink for all ages and temperaments ; and, of all the productions of nature and art, comes *the nearest* to that universal remedy, so much sought after by mankind, but never hitherto discovered.”

In acute diseases the amount of oxygen is too great, either throughout the system, or in some particular organ or part ; and the object of medical science is to diminish that amount. How has this been hitherto effected ? By low diet, bleeding, and other depressing agents ; which diminish the activity of the respiration and circulation—the processes by which oxygen is supplied to the system, and caried to the diseased organs or parts. That these two functions (respiration and circulation) can be diminished by a judicious use of water, more effectually, more speedily, and with far less injury to the constitution, than by any other means, is my belief ; and if so, the treatment of such diseases by water is not only scientific, but in every sense deserving of preference.\* The same preference I concede to the same remedial agent in chronic diseases ; the majority of which depend upon a weak or deficient vital power. Now, as according

\* We cannot lessen the quantity of oxygen in the blood by bleeding, without depriving this fluid at the same time of much of its fibrine and albumen ; its most nutritious constituents.

to Dr. Justus Liebig (the great authority of the present day) the ultimate cause of all force in the animal economy is the change of food to solid organism, and of that organism into lifeless amorphous compounds of oxygen, and as the vigor of the system must be proportional to the rapidity with which this double series of changes is carried on, it is obvious that in water we have the real remedy also for diseases depending on weakness or deficient vital power. “Practical medicine,” observes Liebig, “makes use of cold in a highly rational manner, as a valuable means of exalting and accelerating in an unwonted degree the change of matter.” And again “the cooling of the body, by whatever cause it may be produced, increases the amount of food necessary.” Well may Dr. Edward Johnson remark of these and other similar passages, “how powerfully does all this tell in favour of the doctrines of the Hydropathic philosophy ;—in favour of the external use of cold water—the internal use of cold water—the great value of air and exercise—and against the pernicious effects of habitually enveloping the body in flannel,\* as also against the evil consequences of those so-called comforts—and those multiplied and careful appliances, by which we endeavour to exclude ourselves as far as possible from precisely the two most indispensable of all

\* See observations on flannel and warm clothing at the end of this pamphlet.



earthly blessings, the breath and the dew of heaven—the blessings of air and water.” With water we can produce very opposite effects. We can depress vital action even to the extinction of life; while we can also raise it to the healthy standard, or even beyond it.

The good effects of water in fevers, applied externally, were shown long ago by Dr. Currie of Liverpool, though his mode of application was somewhat different to that of Priessnitz’s, and I think less efficacious—I mean the cold affusion. At Edinburgh also, the latter mode of using water was practised in the beginning of this century by men of the first celebrity—Dr. Gregory for example, and Dr. James Home. The former treated three of his own children in this way under severe scarlatina, with the happiest results. The same was practised by many in this country with the like success; still then, as now, the cries of ignorance, prejudice, and self-interest, were raised against it; and Dr. Currie, its great patron, whose name should be dear to every lover of science, had to complain that a method of treatment so eminently successful had made but slow progress. “The mode of operation of our remedy,” says he, “has been misapplied, the proper period for using it has not been understood; and on some occasions having been resorted to improperly, has brought it into disgrace.” “My little girl,” says Sir Samuel Romilly (*vide* his life,

vol. ii., p. 186) “was last month seized with a very dangerous fever which lasted twenty-one days. Having read in Dr. Currie’s book, of the happy effects produced in many cases by the application of cold water in fevers, I asked Dr. Pitcairn who attended her, whether it would not be advisable to try it. He said he thought it certainly would—that it might be of great service, and could do no harm; but that the prejudice against it in London was so strong, that he never ventured to recommend it. Cold water was accordingly applied to her, and I have no doubt that it saved her life; the delirium ceased the moment after it had been applied, and all symptoms of her fever became milder.”\* “When I served in the army,” writes Dr. Samuel Dickson, “I cut short in this manner,” (dashing a few pitchers of cold water over the patient) “hundreds of inflammatory fevers—fevers that in the higher ranks of society, and under the bleeding and starving system, would

\* We here see a physician of the greatest eminence, in a case of life and death, afraid to make a trial of that which he thought *might be of great service*, simply because the prejudice against it was so strong:—a striking illustration of the truth of the motto I have taken from Bentham. The late Mr. Wadd, a Surgeon of celebrity, was in the habit of using cold applications in the gout, and particularly in his own case. Referring to this he observes, “I thank God I have not paid the debt so long predicted by my brethren of the faculty, and I pray for long life; for should my death happen short of ninety, it would be attributed to the use of cold water in the gout, and may prevent me Christian burial, so strong is prejudice.”

have kept an apothecary and physicians, to say nothing of nurses and cuppers, visiting the patient twice or thrice a day for a month.”\*

It has been well said, “that they who sit enthroned in antiquated and erroneous opinions, find it easier to laugh at methods which threaten to hurl them from their high estate, than to offer a valid objection to them by arguments.” It is so with the Water Cure. So has it been with the discoveries of Galileo, Harvey, Newton, and Jenner; who were all martyrs to persecution, from the ignorant, the prejudiced, and the self-interested: and so it will be with every man who comes forward as an innovator.

In inflammations, whether of a simple or specific nature, nothing so speedily or so effectually restores the healthy balance in the circulation, as the establishing a free perspiration. In fact, when once this equipoise is permanently established, the inflammation may be said to have ceased. Now it is well known to medical men, that our remedies for producing perspiration, are any thing but certain—that we can seldom depend on any one of them to produce the effect we desire. This cannot be said of Priessnitz’s remedy. The art of man could not invent a more effectual mode of exciting perspiration or one more safe; and we might challenge the same art, to invent a better plan for securing a permanent balance in the circulation,

\* Vide Appendix, note B.

than the exercise, the frictions, the early rising, &c., which are part and parcel of the system. But this is not all; in many diseases, there exists an acrimonious or vitiated state of the humours; Priessnitz's method is eminently and superlatively calculated to rid the system of these,—not often perhaps, through the abscesses, ulcers, &c. which form on the exterior of the body during the treatment; but from the alterative, cleansing, and purifying effects of the water, conjoined with simple diet, air, and exercise. I am inclined to think with Priessnitz, however, that these abscesses are often critical, and eliminations of morbid matter; though there can be no doubt but they are occasionally produced by the stimulus and irritation of the frequent applications of the water. But be this as it may, these sores and abscesses are highly beneficial, and have a curative influence similar to that of setons and issues, without their disagreeableness. In diseases of the skin, I feel convinced the hydriatric treatment will be found to be powerfully efficacious. A patient from a distant part of the country came to me some time since, his legs and arms covered with an inveterate scaly disease (*psoriasis diffusa*) for which he had been taking medicine for years without the slightest benefit. I recommended the hydriatric treatment, after three weeks continuance of which, he wrote me, to say that he had left it off in part, because the doctors and his neighbours had told him that

it would kill him ; and that a number of boils with which he was then covered (results of the treatment) were occasioned by poorness of blood for which he should take wine and porter. I immediately replied, recommending the whole of the treatment to be resumed and persevered in. He took my advice, and five weeks after receipt of my letter, he wrote as follows :—“ I have no doubt your treatment will effectually drive the complaint from my system: it has nearly left my legs, and my arms are mending fast. I am quite satisfied it was the cold water system that made the boils come, and they are all fled without the assistance of any medicine but water.” The letters I shall have much pleasure in showing any person. The patient is thirty-four years old, and the complaint had been on him five years.

A respectable physician, Sir John Floyer, many years ago, declared water to be a valuable remedy in asthma, and enforced its use. Priessnitz's treatment gives confirmation to the opinion by establishing the fact, that it has in many instances cured the complaint. In gout and rheumatism we know it is powerfully efficacious.\*

The hydriatric treatment is especially calculated to relieve the nervous and enfeebled, as well as to strengthen particular organs and parts ; and this

\* Dr. Herbert Mayo, lately Senior Surgeon to the Middlesex Hospital, and distinguished as a physiologist and author, who had been long afflicted with chronic rheumatism, has

from the re-action it excites, conjoined with its efficacy in carrying off diseased and vitiated secretions, which are generally accompaniments of such complaints, and sometimes something more,—the *fons et origo mali*. The wet sheet, the sitting and foot baths, the douche, &c., while they have soothed and calmed the nervous system, have improved the secretions, braced and strengthened the constitution, and brought to the patient speedy restoration of health. I have heard of an apothecary, who said that the patient with fever who should be put into a wet sheet as Priessnitz directs, would soon sleep the sleep of death. Nothing but ignorance of the very elements of physiology could lead to such conclusions. The practice rests on such sound physiological principles, that it is impossible that injury can ensue from it, provided Priessnitz's method is followed; and provided its application is not contra-indicated by states of the system, such as those to be hereafter named. The same may be said of the cold bath, after sweating; the sweat produced on Priessnitz's plan, neither fatigues nor exhausts the system, nor does it hurry the pulse or respiration; consequently the

received great benefit from Hydropathy, after trying medicine in vain; and has since from conviction of its superior efficacy, relinquished his honorable post, and opened an Hydropathic establishment on the Rhine.

See Cases 4 and 10 forward; as also Dr. E. Johnson's account of several remarkable cures performed by Priessnitz during his stay at Graefenberg.

body is just as well able to sustain the shock of the bath after perspiring, as it would have been before being subjected to the sudorific process.

What is the first effect of the cold bath? To throw the blood from the exterior parts of the body upon the internal organs, and produce a sensation of chilliness or cold. And what follows? The process termed re-action, to which we have already alluded; and which is nothing more nor less than an increased action in the heart and large vessels; which action has the effect of driving the blood with great force back to the capillaries (small blood vessels) of the skin, giving rise to the sensation called the glow, and to a degree of animation and strength, considerably above the point at which these stood before the plunge. Other phenomena of no less real importance follow. The action of the liver and of all the other secreting organs is increased, and the absorbents and nerves, whose offices are of great importance in the animal economy, become also participators in the change;—a change which may be said to consist in a general increase of activity throughout the functions, and which cannot fail, if often repeated, to be followed in many instances by very beneficial results on the health. This effect consequent upon the first or depressive effect, generally takes place in a greater or less degree, according as the energy of the system approaches to, or recedes from the natural healthy standard;

and when it does not take place, the cold bath is not only of no service, but generally injurious, and should not be continued, inasmuch as it shews great depression of the healthful energy that ought to subsist in the system. The degree of re-action is a criterion of the benefit that may be expected from the bath. Rausse's rule is concise, and cannot be improved upon,—“Never employ any bath or ablution, unless the system possesses the warmth necessary to the production of powerful re-action; and never permit one bath to succeed another until perfect re-action has followed the former.”

The cold bath should not be taken soon after eating; the reason is obvious; it interferes too much with the process of digestion.

The friction, exercise, &c., practised by Priessnitz, assist greatly in recalling the blood to the surface, and establishing a more vigorous circulation—effects, to describe all the benefits resulting from which, in different cases, would exceed the limits or design of this Essay; suffice it to say,—in proportion to the frequency of their repetition, will in general be the permanency and vigour of the circulation throughout the system.

An objection has been made to the oneness of the remedy. Those persons who make this objection should be told that the most experienced and talented physician in London, (Dr. Billing) in his “First Principles of Medicine,” a work universally esteemed, maintains the doctrine of a oneness of



disease; that all diseases, whatever, have exhausted nervous influence for their cause, and consequently must consist in relaxed, enlarged and congested capillaries : a doctrine which, if true,—and it has been maintained also by the most eminent physicians of all ages—leads to the inevitable conclusion that there is but one *cure*. We have in water a remedy which, according to the manner in which it is used, is calculated to fulfil every indication. It is a sedative, tonic, narcotic or stimulant, according as it is applied. And Dr. Billing reduces all medicines whatever as acting in one or other of these ways, and productive of but these four effects :—and even these operate ultimately but in one way, viz. :—by the restoration of the capillaries to their healthy dimensions.

In an article in the *Lancet*, of the 12th November, 1842, by a Doctor Robert Dick, the doctor, after informing his readers that he has been surprised by the placidity and indifference—the all but approbation with which several medical journals speak of hydropathy, says :—“The cases with which I have commenced this paper are striking proofs of, I may well say, the terrible power of that remedy which Priessnitz and his followers rudely and mistakenly wield, and indiscriminately apply.” And what cases do my readers fancy those were? Why cases which the subjects of them absurdly attempted to treat themselves; and which they did not treat on Priessnitz’s System, nor on

any system at all resembling it, if we may judge from the information which Dr. Dick himself has furnished. Indeed, Dr. Dick admits this, though he tells us immediately afterwards, that several cases regularly treated by disciples of Priessnitz and by the quack himself have come to his knowledge, in some of which no benefit has followed, while in others ill effects have ensued. He however, neither furnishes those cases nor the names of the disciples who treated them. We want proofs, not vague assertions. But I would ask Dr. Dick, does he know of no cases treated with medicines in which no benefit followed, or in which ill effects have ensued? If no such cases have occurred in his own practice, he is by far the most successful practitioner in Europe. Again, "every inquirer," he says, "must adopt one of two conclusions; either that the practice followed by the most intelligent, educated, experienced, and observant men, from Hippocrates to Chambers" (why Chambers?) "has been in a great measure useless and illusory; or that Priessnitz is an empiric whose successes are casual; and the only apology for the inconceivable rashness of whose measures, and for the diseases and deaths he is causing, are his possible sincerity and certain ignorance." That Dr. Robert Dick's heated imagination has presented to his eyes ghosts and spectres, hideous and numerous of Priessnitz's murdered patients, appears quite evident; but, what must every man of com-

mon sense think, when he is acquainted with the fact, that Priessnitz has not lost six patients, in every thousand; a number at least five times less, I fancy, than Dr. Dick himself or any other medical man has ever lost out of every thousand patients.\* And, for my own part, as far as medical treatment is concerned, I hesitate not for one moment to adopt the conclusion, and I have Dr. Baillie, Dr. Heberden (see quotation from his

\* “The Austrian Government, perhaps the most jealous in Europe in allowing the assembling of people for any purpose whatever, and particularly violent against empirics, or the sale of any medicine by any other than regularly certificated persons, sent a commission of inquiry to Graefenberg. This commission found that the only agents there employed in the curing of disease were cold water, air, and exercise; and they had such evidence of its beneficial effects, and the total absence of all danger, even in the most advanced stage of disease, that on their report, the Government allowed Mr. Priessnitz to continue his praiseworthy operations. Since that time he has been honoured by the friendship of some of the Royal Family, and by very many of the first people in the empire.”—CLARIDGE.

According to the Government Register, which is open for inspection to every one, and the authenticity of which cannot be doubted, Priessnitz treated 7219 patients in ten years, embracing persons of every variety of age and constitution, and of both sexes, afflicted too by every variety of disease, and many in the worst stages; and who had tried in vain the skill of the most eminent physicians throughout Europe, yet out of this vast number, 38 deaths only occurred—a number small beyond all precedent. After this, what opinion can we form of medical men putting in print the above and like absurdities respecting the treatment?

Medical Commentaries, page 9) and other men of first-rate eminence on my side, that the practice of medical men has hitherto been nearly useless and illusory, while the successes of Priessnitz are not casual, but far more certain than those of any medical man since the days of Hippocrates. But, do not quacks, aye, and medical men too, often “rudely and mistakenly wield and indiscriminately apply” the lancet, the blister, the seton, the issue, mercury, &c.? On this subject I could “a tale unfold,” and I doubt whether there is a medical man in existence that could not harrow up the very soul, were he but to tell a tenth part of the misery and loss of life he has known to ensue from the improper administration of medicines. There cannot follow a twentieth part of the mischief from the water remedy, that arises from the use of medicines ; there cannot be the grave mistakes committed with water that are daily committed with the remedies of the Pharmacopœia. How many patients do we find get worse, and worse, and at last give up the ghost, and that often so suddenly as to excite suspicions that they were poisoned, under the “*usual remedies*,” as they are called. This is all nothing I suppose with Dr. Dick ; but let a patient get in the slightest degree worse under the water cure, and reprobation *of course* ought to ensue.

From Dr. Dick’s denunciation of the Water Cure, a person would suppose that for medical men

to err, with a choice of remedies at their command, would be impossible. My readers are already acquainted with the opinions of men of somewhat greater eminence than Dr. Dick on the subject—Drs. Baillie and Sir William Knighton. They shall now know the sentiments of a few others of no less distinguished character. “There has been a great increase of medical men of late years,” said the eccentric and talented Abernethy, “but upon my life *diseases have increased in proportion.*” And what was the opinion of the celebrated Gregory? “medical doctrines are little better than stark staring absurdities.” “Thousands,” remarks Professor Frank, “are slaughtered in the quiet sick room. Governments should at once either banish medical men and their art, or they should take proper means that the lives of people may be safer than at present; when they look far less after the practice of this dangerous art, *and the murders committed in it*, than after the lowest trades.”

Another article headed “The Tub and Shower Bath houses,” in the same number of the Journal which contains Dr. Dick’s five lengthy and leaden columns is too contemptible to require observation. It is without a name, and in this its author evinced a degree of caution, which atones in some measure for his want of common sense. Again, in the *Lancet* of 24th December, 1842, we have a fresh article by Dr. Thomas H. Sylvester, in which we are gravely told, the patient sank a

victim to the *Water Cure*; and to improve upon this, the editor, or some one for him, adds in a note, “we have given it another name—the Water Poison.” Now, who, with a grain of common sense, that reads the article, but must laugh at the absurdity, not only of the doctor’s conclusion, but of the editorial heading? Here is a patient upon whom, after a month or six weeks’ treatment, several abscesses form; and who, after a fortnight’s endurance of great pain, feverishness, &c. imprudently undertakes in that state a long and wearisome journey, which the narrator informs us (and we may well believe him) he accomplished with some difficulty. Arrived at home, Dr. S. visits him *immediately*, and in what state think my readers did he find him? Not quite so bad as every medical man acquainted with the state in which the patient left Marienberg would expect; but with “abscesses of a livid hue, exquisitely tender to the touch, and a bloody sanies streaming from their apertures.” That this patient would have been restored to health had he remained at the establishment, is my firm conviction; his imprudence in commencing such a journey in such a condition, killed him; it, in fact, converted a salutary crisis into a dangerous disease, and consequent suffering and death.\* This was my

\* To treat with drugs the crisis produced by water, is to endanger the patient’s life.

opinion relative to this gentleman's case, in the little work I published on the Water Cure twelve months since ; and the following from the pen of Dr. Freeman, which appeared some time after in the *Lancet*, proves that I was correct :—

“ Sir,—Circumstances have prevented my seeing the *Lancet* for the last few weeks, but I am told that on the 24th of December, (page 485) you published the case of the Rev. Mr. Good, and headed it “ *A case of poisoning, by Priessnitz, with water.*” The case was one not treated by Priessnitz, but by Dr. Schmitz, Physician to the Hydropathic Institution at Marienberg, near Boppard, who is the son of a distinguished Prussian Judge. Mr. Good came to Marienberg, in the neighbourhood of which place I happened to be then residing, sometime in August or the beginning of September. He was then affected with diabetes, which had reduced him to an extreme degree of emaciation and debility. His appearance indicated so great an amount of suffering, and so near an approach of dissolution, that he was an object of compassion, repeatedly expressed to me by his fellow-patients. Every one considered his death inevitable.

“ To every body's surprise, shortly after commencing the treatment, his symptoms began to subside, and his appearance rapidly to improve. His amendment continued, steadily and progressively, until the time of his leaving the institution. When he came to Marienberg he was, in a great

measure, confined to his room. A week or two after the application of the water cure, I repeatedly saw him climbing the steep mountains, bordering that part of the Rhine. His progress was such as I was not at all prepared to expect, and gave me a higher opinion than any thing I had previously witnessed, of the efficacy and value of the Hydropathic method.

“At the latter end of October, when labouring under a severe critical eruption of furuncles, &c., Mr. Good suddenly announced to Dr. Schmitz his intention of leaving the establishment. So great was the Doctor’s conviction of the danger he incurred by that suicidal step, that he remarked, “Monsieur Good is *mad* to think of leaving in his present condition.” Notwithstanding this caution, Mr. Good proceeded on a tour, first to Frankfort, and then to England. The remainder of his history has been already told by others; I presume correctly.

“Now, permit me to ask in what respect this case differs from the case of a person who commits some imprudence, which he knows to be injurious, while under the active influence of mercury, and suffers the same fatal consequences of his folly? Or from that of another, who does the same thing after extensive depletion? It appears to me that the consequences in any of these cases are to be attributed entirely to the patient’s own imprudent and obstinate conduct, and that such cases are by



no means to be justly described as cases of poisoning, or of murder, on the part of the physician under whose treatment the patient has been salivated, or subjected to the Hydropathic Crisis.

“ I may remark, in conclusion, that the Crisis is not unfrequently produced to the same extent as in this case in the large establishments in Germany, without any danger whatever, if the necessary precautions are observed, (although patients in the critical condition, are by no means fit to undertake journeys of pleasure in October); and that Dr. Schmitz was, throughout his management of this case, assisted by the advice, and encouraged by the concurrence, of a distinguished Surgeon and Physiological writer of London.—I am Sir, Your Obedient Servant, JAMES FREEMAN, M. D.”

*Sherborne House, Cheltenham, Jan. 30, 1843.*

And now, before proceeding any further, I beg to recommend strongly to every person into whose hands this Essay may fall, an attentive perusal of a little pamphlet published some years since, (now in its sixth edition) by that excellent scholar and talented physician, Dr. Henry, of Dublin, entitled “*A Dialogue between a Bilious Patient and a Physician.*” It is to be had at Renshaw’s, in the Strand, and its perusal may be the means of saving thousands of constitutions from utter ruin by medicines. Dr. Wilson’s publication entitled “*Stomach Complaints and Drug Diseases,*” may also be of much greater service to the purchaser than

its cost. But I had nearly forgotten to mention the Rev. Mr. Abdy's work on the Water Cure : it is to be had of the publisher of this Essay, and is in my opinion a very valuable publication, one that every man who values his own or his neighbour's health should read. It contains not only a faithful narrative of the sufferings of others but of his own personal sufferings and almost death from drugs administered by the so styled "eminent of the faculty," and his and their extraordinary recovery by water from their effects.

That all patients who try the water cure will get better, that some will not get worse, are expectations which no man, who is sane, could entertain. There cannot, however, in the hands of medical men, occur the serious mistakes under this treatment that occur in the same hands with medicines ; and if by a careless or improper administration of the former, mischief should ensue, the same remedy will very often remove the mischief, if judiciously applied : for example, I had a rheumatic patient, who from carelessness after the sudorific process got a sore throat ; water cured his throat in twenty-four hours' time. A judicious medical man who studies the water cure carefully can scarcely injure his patient. That Priessnitz is a man possessed of most surprising discrimination, we have the testimonies of many very talented individuals.

As to Dr. Dick's assertion that "Hydropathy

is the monomania of a man utterly devoid of both medical and general education," it looks to me very unlike the assertion of a man possessed of either, and will just pass for what it is worth—nothing.

But we may err in regard to our expectations from hydriatrim. It will not cure all diseases : it has its limits. Success cannot be expected from it in any of the following cases :—

1. Organic malformation.
2. Organic destruction.
3. A very reduced state of the system from which re-action cannot be elicited.

It must be observed however, that to derive from water the many benefits which it is in the power of the skilful to confer on man through the adoption of hydriatrim, water must in most cases be drank very freely during the treatment—that total abstinence from stimulating foods and drinks is essentially necessary, and that patients should never attempt to treat their own cases—should never turn their own physicians. If they prescribe for themselves, they will probably have occasion to repent of their temerity.

That water judiciously used will cure many complaints ; that it will cure several diseases which cannot be cured by medicines, is my certain belief. But if it can cure a variety of complaints, it is by being used in manifold ways ; and great judgment, skill, consideration, and caution,

are required in the application and use of it. A knowledge of the laws of health and disease, is essentially necessary to him who would practise it : or else a long experience, combined with the discrimination of a Priessnitz. To plunge into a cold bath when covered with perspiration from exercise or over-fatigue, might be attended with danger, and perhaps death, to the person that had the temerity to resort to such an act ; but the danger arises from the state of the vital organs at the time, which are highly excited, as is shown by the pulse and the breathing, and from the depressed or collapsed condition of the nervous energy. On the other hand, the passive perspiration produced by Priessnitz's sudorific process, neither exhausts the nervous system nor hurries the respiration or pulse. All is calm ; and the patient though bathed in perspiration under this process, even more profusely than he could be from the most violent exercise, is in consequence of the unimpaired and unexhausted energies of his organs, plunged into the bath without the slightest risk. In like manner, though it might be death to many to sleep in a wet sheet, yet the wet sheet applied as Priessnitz directs, is never attended with the slightest bad effect. And why ? If persons would make themselves acquainted with Priessnitz's plan, they would not talk so loosely on this part of the treatment as they do. Rational reflection would tell them that to sleep in a wet

sheet with a dry blanket tightly enveloping it, and with bed-clothes over these, is a very different thing to sleeping between damp sheets. The sheet wetted, properly applied, and closely covered with the blanket, &c., so as to exclude the atmosphere, becomes a stimulant and counter-irritant, and in the course of a very short time produces a sensation of warmth in the body causing a warm vapour to be given out, which being kept in and confined to the skin by the other coverings, in some sort puts the patient into a vapour bath. The same remarks apply to the umschlags or wet bandages and a variety of other curative appliances, which instead of being fraught with death, are, if I might so term them, so many safety valves to the constitution; all calculated to insure re-action, and consequently, to bring about an equilibrium in the circulation and excitement; the want of which gives rise to disorders and diseases of parts or of the whole body, so numerous and proteiform as to defy enumeration or description.

The rule to guide us in drinking water as well as in using it externally, depends on the degree of vital heat in each individual. Some may use an amazing quantity in both ways, not only without injury, but with incredible benefit, while to others whose vitality is low, the quantity must be greatly lessened. Even these, however, may be often brought by degrees to a more free use of it, and

with the best results. Frictions of the skin, and exercise, enable patients to use it more freely, both internally and externally—which is on many accounts often very desirable. Pelletan's Memoir on currents of heat in the human body, may be read with advantage by persons desirous of understanding the rationale of the doctrine of hydriatrim; as may also Liebig's admirable work on Organic Chemistry.

That hydropathy (more properly hydriatrim) will in this generation, if ever, supersede the use of drugs, I do not believe. Our mode of living; our occupations; our habits, which are nearly all artificial, and at war with the laws of health, are so rooted and grounded in us, and have so deteriorated both body and mind, that few have strength of mind, or moral courage to live as physiology and common sense teach; or when ill, to submit to a cure so opposed to common ideas, and to unnatural and effeminate habits—habits, however, which civilized society itself (speaking generally) believes to be not only natural, but promotive of health; and in this opinion lies the great difficulty of introducing the system. Notwithstanding all this, however, there is in the present day an anxious desire for knowledge, and many begin to think that “the proper study of mankind is man.” I am happy to say I know some such individuals; and in a few of our

schools, much to their credit, physiology is now made a part of education.

I do not consider medicine useless: it has done good in many cases. I quarrel not with those who use medicines; but I consider that I have, in water, a very powerful and efficacious remedy,—one that will often cure when medicines fail—one that will cure most curable diseases, and that too, without entailing on the system any of those direful sequelæ which often arise from the use of drugs.

But what say the relatives, the friends, and the sufferers themselves, to the long, long list of diseases which have for centuries set drugs at defiance? What say these persons? Shall a system which can appeal to the testimonies of clergymen and medical men, of peasants and of princes, for its great success in those very diseases which have hitherto set medicines at defiance—shall such a system be rejected? Shall those who have long smarted under diseases the most agonizing, without reaping any benefit whatever from medicines; who have been for years flying from one medical man to another, in the vain expectation of finding a cure;—shall those martyrs to disease who have sought relief fruitlessly from other sources, be denied the benefit of a system which has effected so much? Shall he to whom returning seasons bring no relief, abstain from a trial of a system, whose efficacy has exceeded all anticipation—I

might say, all credibility? Medical men, whether Alopathists or Hydriatrists have, it is to be hoped the same end in view—the prevention and cure of disease, and the good of their fellow-creatures; and cannot in justice, or with a show of reason, be at enmity with one another. No medical man, I am sure, who has the good of his fellow-men in view, will be backward in recommending to those whose diseases he cannot relieve by the usual remedies, a trial of a system which aims at the same end as his; and which has effected cures in many cases, where medicines had failed to give any relief whatever. In gout, rheumatism, indigestion, bilious complaints, nervous affections, inflammatory, cutaneous, and many other forms of disease, the facts are so numerous of its infinitely superior efficacy and safety over drugs, that the finest spun theories, and most cunningly devised fables will prevail about as much against it as did Dame Partington's broom in keeping back the ocean. It is not quite so easy to persuade men who have reaped the relief, which hundreds, nay thousands, have reaped from the Water Cure, after all other remedies had been found ineffectual, that all is a bubble and will come to nothing; as the Dicks, the Silvesters, and the Wakleys of the present day imagine. One fact is worth a thousand theoretical volumes; and the following brief history of a few of the cases which have been lately under my care, and for the cure of the



greater number of which, men eminent in the profession had prescribed in vain;—will I think furnish every unprejudiced mind with abundant proof of the efficacy of our remedy. Other facts equally conclusive and well-authenticated,—facts, which the opponents of the system seem a great deal more earnest in their endeavours to suppress, than we to blazon them to the world,—are already before the public.

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### CASE I.

A Lady residing in the vicinity of Ramsgate, subject for many years to a very confined state of bowels, irregular appetite, flatulence, and all the usual symptoms of indigestion, had taken a variety of aperient, tonic, and other medicines, prescribed by different medical men, without deriving any permanent relief. Finding, on the contrary, the state of her health becoming considerably worse, she was induced to adopt a short course of Hydriatric treatment, and was completely relieved of all these distressing and harassing symptoms, and now enjoys excellent health, having taken no medicine of any description for the last eighteen months.

### CASE II.

A Gentleman exceedingly nervous and very susceptible of cold (so much so that he had not for years ventured out of doors, except enveloped in flannels and great coat) came to my house on the 6th of December, 1842, to undergo the treatment, and left on the 21st of the same month. On the fifth day he was enabled to divest himself of his flannels and great coat, and from this period till the latter date, though he rose generally between four and five o'clock, and was out of doors the greater part of the day, and that frequently in damp rainy weather, he neither caught cold, nor felt any unpleasant results; and what may

appear extraordinary, though he had previously been a daily sufferer from coldness of feet, he was entirely freed from it from the time he commenced the treatment.

### CASE III.

A Lady of this Town highly nervous and debilitated, whose susceptibility to cold was so great that she could seldom leave her house without experiencing an attack of influenza, by daily application of the wet sheet, with baths, &c. found this susceptibility greatly diminished; and she can now walk several miles a-day, whereas formerly the slightest exertion produced exhaustion. Several medical gentlemen of eminence prescribed for this Lady, but without any but the most trifling and temporary relief being afforded.

### CASE IV.

Mrs. Barrar, of Brentford, aged 65, put herself under my care on the 27th of May last, nearly a cripple from rheumatic gout in the ancle joints, and very much troubled with indigestion and loss of appetite, under which she had laboured many years. Six weeks of the treatment gradually released her from every symptom of the disease, and she left my house able to walk as briskly as any person of her age, and perfectly convinced of the powerful efficacy of water. On the 6th of September I received a letter from her son-in-law, stating that she wished I would give every publicity to her case, and that on the Thursday morning previous, she had walked to Richmond and back, a distance of six miles.

### CASE V.

Horace Jones, aged ten months, the son of Mr. J. W. Jones, of New Brentford, Middlesex, of a very inflammatory habit of body, was attacked on the 10th of June, at half-past eleven at night, with quick and full pulse, much heat of skin, great difficulty of breathing, cough, and other symptoms of violent inflammation of the lungs, which yielded rapidly to the wet sheet, &c. The fever abated in twenty hours, and the next day the child was quite well.

## CASE VI.

Mr. S., of full phlegmatic habit, had for years been afflicted with flatulency and pain in the loins and region of the kidneys, and in both thighs; frequent sense of confusion in the head, and inability to read or study, for any length of time. The sweating process, succeeded by the plunge bath thrice repeated, sitz baths, the heating bandage round the abdomen, &c. perfectly removed all complaints in less than three weeks, and till this time, (a period of four months) he has experienced no symptom of their return, and can study for hours without the slightest fatigue.

## CASE VII.

The child of a Gentleman residing in this Town, was in the latter part of June last, attacked with restlessness, crying in the night, intense heat of skin, shiverings, rapid pulse, &c. succeeded by inflammation in the mouth and fauces, and apthous ulceration, for which the wet sheet was several times applied, and ultimately with the happiest effect. An ulcerative crisis soon appeared on the loins and hips, which relieved at once all the inflammatory symptoms, and which itself disappeared in a few days, the little patient gaining health and strength rapidly.

## CASE VIII.

A male servant of the above gentleman was attacked in July last, with a violent bilious remittent fever (a fever such as I have often seen last six weeks under the most judicious medical treatment) from which he was perfectly freed in one week, and in less than another week had resumed his work. The wet sheet repeated fifteen times the first two days, sitz baths and the heating bandage, and drinking largely of water were the only remedies resorted to in this case.

## CASE IX.

A Lady, of the Society of Friends, had for many years laboured under much debility and a greatly impaired constitution, and afterwards for a length of time under Dysentery. From frequent

returns of the latter, notwithstanding the advice of several medical men, she was suffering when she came to my house ; as also from pain at stomach, flatulence, and want of appetite ; and for the last six months could not take animal food, without its causing much pain and acting as a powerful aperient ; her diet having consisted wholly of bread, milk, and arrow-root. In three weeks from the commencement of the treatment, this patient could take animal food without experiencing any injurious effect therefrom ; and before she left (which was three weeks after) was enabled to partake freely of every thing which came to table, not only with impunity, but with an excellent appetite.

By reference to letter 5, received from the patient herself, it will be seen that the above beneficial results have not been of an evanescent character.

#### CASE X.

Mrs. Rider of Turnham Green, had laboured for a long time under indigestion, and occasionally spasms of the chest and rheumatism, for which no treatment had afforded any but the most temporary relief ; but from which she every day improved under the water system, and left my house in health and excellent spirits, after having been but four weeks subjected to the treatment.

The following patients shall speak for themselves, by verbatim transcripts of their own letters ; most of them inserted at the *request* of the writers, and none of them without their *permission* having been first obtained.

#### LETTER I.—CASE XI.

*(Addressed to the Editor of the Pictorial Times.)*

Having been five weeks under the medical care of A. COURTNEY, SURGEON, R. N. of RAMSGATE, and having during that time received considerable benefit, I wish to call the attention of others to the efficacious mode of treatment practised by him ; and which

is now so much gaining ground in public estimation under the well-known cognomen of the WATER CURE. I went to his establishment complaining of indigestion and flatulence, accompanied with a degree of general debility, which showed itself particularly in feelings of languor and depression of spirits towards evening. These symptoms very much diminished during my stay with him; so much so that I have no doubt that, if circumstances had allowed of my remaining a longer time, they would have entirely disappeared. I may add, from personal experience, that patients placing themselves under A. C.'s care may depend upon experiencing all those kind attentions which are so particularly grateful to invalids, but are seldom looked for except amidst the endearments of home.

Croydon, Surrey.

F. H. ROUS.

*[The Letter of which the following is a copy, was written by one of my patients to his Physician, (who had recommended to him the sea-side and sea-bathing) informing him of his reasons for adopting the Hydropathic treatment.]*

## LETTER II—CASE XII.

*Ramsgate, August 3rd, 1843.*

Dear Doctor K.,—I have often thought of writing to you, but have as often been prevented by a knowledge of your very numerous engagements, being unwilling to trespass unnecessarily even for a moment upon your valuable time. But when I am informed that the announcement of my having commenced subjecting myself to Hydropathic treatment, has caused you not only "great surprise," but the manifestation of some degree of "anger," I can no longer hold my peace.

On arriving here I found myself so much debilitated as to be unable to avail myself of the usual advantages derivable from a sojourn by the sea-side. I was consequently induced, in concurrence with the wishes of some relatives, (who very kindly accompanied myself and my wife to Ramsgate) to have medical advice. After suffering a daily martyrdom from injections, and undergoing a course of iodine-ing, &c., I found at the end

of 7 weeks I had, after having incurred a very heavy expence, made little or no progress, and that *another* fistula was forming immediately opposite the old one, and accompanied by all the painful and depressing symptoms which were attendant on the former.

I was consequently led to turn my attention seriously to a subject, the claims of which in my then condition, had been repeatedly urged upon me, by a gentleman whom I was then visiting, and who informed me that most favourable results had been experienced by his wife and several of his acquaintance, from the cold water treatment. After a careful perusal of the admirable work on Hydropathy, recently published by Dr. E. Johnson, (the author of that popular work, "Life, Health, and Disease,") I felt fully convinced that though Vincent Priessnitz be but "a Silesian peasant," his mode of treatment was, as represented by Sir Charles Scudamore, Drs. E. Johnson, Wilson, Gully, and others of the faculty, more rational and evidently shown by a mass of incontrovertible facts, to be more succesful than the old method.

I consulted Mr. Courtney, Surgeon, R. N., the Proprietor of a Hydropathic Establishment in this Town, to whose intelligence and sound sense all who were acquainted with him, with whom I came in contact, bore witness. He felt assured the treatment above mentioned, would be highly beneficial; and, after a week more of reading, reflection, and consultation with several friends in town, and elsewhere, I commenced the adoption of the system.

After having been under Mr. C's care not quite a fortnight, at the commencement of which from the pain occasioned by my second fistula, I could scarcely walk up and down stairs, or round the garden even by the aid of a stick, every movement being painful, and every thing appearing a burden, I can *now* state that the inflammation is very nearly subsided; the new fistula being nearly well, and the old one discharging very little. I am able to walk, and do walk at least six miles a-day with perfect freedom and comfort, have a most excellent appetite, and feel a general flow of spirits and energy, which is surprising even to myself:

though the perusal of Claridge and Johnson had prepared me to expect it in the course of time.

The townspeople, whose notice I had attracted by my grave-yard-like appearance and creeping gait, already pronounce me a miracle. Thus, while grateful in the first place, to that "great Physician," by whom I trust I have been directed to the use of *these* means, and without whose blessing, *all* means would prove unavailing, I can but think with satisfaction on the mode by which I have every prospect of experiencing a perfect cure; and consequently subscribe myself a Hydrophilist, and feel a deep anxiety that the subject should obtain more general attention.

Mr. C. has several other patients, one of whom had been pronounced incurable by several medical men, (this is her own statement) he sent home on Monday full of health and spirits; and all of those who remain declare they have received equal benefit from the treatment, diversified, of course to meet their peculiar cases. Among them is a Clergyman, of great respectability, who delights to bear testimony to the advantages he has derived therefrom, as well as to the judicious manner in which it is applied by Mr. C.

In conclusion, may I be allowed earnestly to request your careful, and (as I doubt not it will be) your unprejudiced perusal of Dr. E. Johnson's work on Hydropathy (Price 5s. 6d. Simpkin and Marshall.) I think you will find he is completely successful in his attempts to show that the *principles* on which the "water-cure" is founded, closely accords with those promulgated by Professor Liebig and Dr. Billing, and with the views of many other eminently scientific men of the present day; and feel assured you will not deem the time mis-spent which has been so employed.

With much respect,

I remain,

Yours very truly,

To Dr. K.

W. C. J.

[*From the same patient, after his return home.*]

### LETTER III.

Dear Sir,—Having conceded to your request, to allow the insertion of the letter I wrote to my Physician, in your forthcoming prospectus and pamphlet, it is but just to him to state that I shortly after received a reply, written in an unprejudiced spirit, and full of kindly feeling. He therein stated that I “had been misinformed as to his having felt angry, even in the slightest degree, at hearing I had commenced the Hydropathic mode of treatment,” that he “had no doubt whatever as to much and extraordinary benefit having been effected in some cases by that mode;” and declared his intention of “taking an early opportunity of reading Dr. E. Johnson’s work on the subject.”

I need not tell you, Sir, how rejoiced I am at being enabled to address you from *home* after so long an absence; and to be able to do so in a state of health such as I have not enjoyed for many months, I ought almost to say years, is an abundant cause for gratitude.

It is unnecessary to enter into particulars, further than to state, that both of my fistulas appear (as indeed you believed they were, after six weeks’ application of the cold water system) entirely healed; and my appetite and flow of spirits are as good as when I left your establishment. I may be allowed to add that in carrying out the general principles of Hydropathy, at home, so far as consists in early rising, entire ablution, and the taking water as my beverage, I shall be doing that which has now become most pleasurable in itself; independently of its immense advantage in preserving the precious pearl which I have once more regained.

Commencing as I did the “cold water cure”—(a title which I *once* thought presumptuous) in a state of great debility, and constant and severe pain, it is not surprising I should have anticipated much not merely unpleasant, but actually distressing, in the application of the same.



For the benefit of those invalids who may be similarly situated to myself, I would most confidently assure you, that *one* day's subjection to it sufficed to banish these "horrors" from my mind; and a few more only were needful in order to convert the performance of a duty into a source of real gratification.

In conclusion, allow me to offer you thanks, as warm as ever I offered to any human being, for those unremitting attentions, to which, under the blessing of God, I owe my restoration. Please to present my respects to Mrs. C., whom you may most correctly term your "help-meet," both from her skill in superintending the female department of your establishment, and in rendering it to all its inmates as nearly like a "home," as any other place than that can be.

Believe me,

My Dear Sir,

Yours with much respect,

Oct. 4, 1843.

W. C. J.

P.S.—I shall feel it due as well to the cause of Hydropathy, as of common humanity, to surrender my time, either personally or by letter, to any who may call upon or write to me, for the purpose of learning further particulars either of my own case, and your mode of treatment, or of my observations on its application in *other* cases.

You are therefore at full liberty to give my name and address to those who may desire the same, for the purposes above mentioned.

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*Remarks.—In the above case, blame did not attach to the medical man, but to the system, for no treatment of drugs could have been of service; and the patient was too much disordered in health to render success even probable from what under different circumstances would have insured his recovery viz. an operation.*

*I have lately received the following communication from the Clergyman referred to in the second letter.*

#### LETTER IV.—CASE XIII.

My Dear Sir,—I have the pleasure of informing you that I continue to enjoy all the benefits I received from the water treatment while under your care. My strength which had been first attacked many years since by the influence of WHITE LEAD, from which I never fully recovered, and which had been further reduced by a double attack of influenza, in the spring of 1837, and again in that of 1838, and by the exertions of a laborious charge, is now restored, so that few persons of my age (71) could contend with me in the exercise of it.

For years I had scarcely ever known the comfort of a sound and refreshing sleep. I slept in pain and awoke unrefreshed. I now sleep soundly and comfortably, and arise refreshed. I no longer suffer from indigestion, and pursue the duties of my calling with cheerfulness and alacrity, as great as at any former period of my life; though I had been obliged to discontinue public duty for more than two months before I visited your establishment. I have great reason indeed to respect and esteem you as the instrument in the hands of a most gracious Providence, of restoring me to a state of health and comfort which I never expected again to enjoy.

I remain, my Dear Sir,

Very truly and gratefully yours,

J. PEERS.

Lane-End, High Wycombe, Bucks,

August 15, 1843.

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*[The following Letter referred to in case 9, was forwarded me by the patient, with a request that I would insert it in the next edition of my Prospectus, and in this Pamphlet.]*

## LETTER V.

*To the Editors of the British Friend.*

Respected Friends,—Having first been made acquainted through your valuable publication with the Hydriatric Establishment at Ramsgate, conducted by A. Courtney, Surgeon, I am desirous of making known through the same medium, the good effects of the water system; and hope those who are suffering from disease, and particularly of long standing, will not despair, or think there is no cure for them because drugs have failed.

In the spring of 1842, I was taken ill rather suddenly with an internal complaint, for which of course medicine was given, and which I continued taking almost daily till the twelfth month, but without deriving any permanent benefit; for even when I gained a little more strength than usual, I was unable to take animal food without renewing the disorder, and causing considerable suffering: and for six months previous to my going to Ramsgate (which was in sixth month last) I was obliged to abstain from fruit, vegetables, tea and coffee, as well as animal food, and subsist almost entirely on bread, milk, and arrow-root. After trying the water cure a short time, I had the satisfaction of being able to partake of either of the above mentioned articles of diet, and can still continue to do so without producing their former effects, for which I hope to feel truly thankful. The system is in itself simple though very powerful, and ought to be practised only by judicious medical men, and by those who are not actuated by sinister motives, but have the general benefit of mankind in view; and I have no doubt most if not *all* the patients who have been under A. Courtney's care, will acquiesce with me in considering him a person of this description. I can testify from my own experience and observation, that every attention is paid to the domestic comforts of the patients.

I am respectfully your friend,

Uffculme, Devon,  
7th of 9th Month, 1843.

A. SOUTHEY.

P.S.—Should any Friend think of visiting the above Establishment, I will most readily give them any necessary information.

Some of the cases just recorded—and I have treated others of the same character—belong to a numerous class of complaints (a class far more numerous than most persons have any conception of,) named DRUG DISEASES ;—diseases brought into existence by aperient and other medicines, the frequent repetition of which irritate and abrade the fine lining membrane of the stomach and bowels, and end eventually in paralysing and destroying their tone. But this is not all : the liver, the head, and other important organs, become after a time, participators in suffering, from sympathy, if not from the direct effect of the medicines; and altogether a complication of diseases, whose name is legion, ensue, which are rarely curable, except by a judicious internal and external use of water.

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Believing that the perusal of the above brief exhibition of some of the results which have arisen from Hydropathy in my own practice, during the last few months, would assist in removing apprehensions which have prevailed as to the safety of the application of its principles, as well as show the rationality of those principles, I felt it a duty to lay them before the public. And I have done this the more confidently, both because a charge has been made against such professional men as have consented to become once more learners, at the feet of a Silesian Peasant, that they are ashamed to make public the results of such a reversion from the old paths. I feel assured that the more frequently such result are presented to “the eye of light and the face of day,” the sooner must the voice of public opinion

be enlisted in favor of a mode of treatment which reflection and experience alike prove to be the most natural, and consequently, (as facts have shown), the most generally successful. To that voice, I feel no doubt, the medical profession will, as a body, ultimately be compelled to yield; even supposing some of them should have succeeded for a time in shutting their eyes to the mass of evidence which is daily accumulating. Before proceeding further, however, I trust it will not be deemed irrelevant to state that I did not attempt to practice the Water Cure till after a thorough examination of the system; nor even then, but on a conscientious conviction that its principles were rational, and in accordance with the great fundamental principle of all medical practice, as laid down by our best writers, as well as in strict harmony with those new views of life lately promulgated by the celebrated Liebig. To this conviction,—to which every case I have treated has given additional confirmation,—it may be objected that medical men in general, and the leading medical journals also, are opposed to the system. My reply is,—Truth is not always on the side of the majority; and assertion is not proof. And for my own part, I have never yet read a single article against hydropathy that contained a single sentence of sound argument; nor do I believe that anything like argument can be brought against it. “Hear both sides” is an excellent maxim, but one that has in

all ages been too little attended to. Let those who would condemn the system read first the excellent and highly scientific work, published by Dr. Edwd. Johnson, as also the valuable works of Sir Chas. Scudamore and Drs. Wilson and Gully, (men of known talent) before they take for granted the flippant objections which have been brought against it,—objections which their authors never could have penned, had they entered into calm and unprejudiced examination of the subject.

That Hydropathy should be opposed and ridiculed by all grades of the profession is not to be wondered at, when it is remembered, as has been before observed, that the discoveries of Galileo, of Harvey, and many others of equal importance, have met with neglect or strong opposition from the leading philosophers of the day. What was the reception of Newton's discovery, Dr. Chalmers tells us in the following eloquent language :—  
“Authority scowled upon it, and taste was disgusted by it, and fashion was ashamed of it ; and all the beauteous speculation of former days was cruelly broken up by this new announcement of the better philosophy, and scattered like the fragments of an aerial vision, over which the past generations of the world had been sleeping their profound and their pleasing reverie.”

To these painful truths many might be added of a like nature ; but enough has been said to convince the most sceptical, that by the ordinary

practise of mankind, great discoveries have ever been treated with hostility by the generation to whom they were originally published; and their authors and disciples with hatred and contempt, or to say the least, with neglect. If, therefore, Hydropathy be a discovery at all, and especially if it be also important, it must of necessity come into collision on the most weighty topics, with the opinions of men hitherto venerated as authorities; and according to the custom of the world, receive its share of ridicule and abuse. If, however, we are to profit by the teachings of history, we ought, after surveying the examples of weakness and wickedness which it exhibits, to divest ourselves of every prejudice against the subject, founded on its hostile reception by men of established reputation. I feel satisfied that the adoption of such a course, with reference to the subject in question, would result in a thorough conviction that the principles of Hydropathy are entirely in accordance with the best and most recent views of life, and based on the soundest therapeutic principles. With reference to myself, I rest my opinions not merely on theory, but on practice. That practice enables me confidently to recommend water as a remedy not only powerfully efficacious in many chronic complaints in which medicines have hitherto invariably failed to afford any permanent relief, but as a remedy which will cure most forms of acute disease, far

more rapidly than drugs, and unlike them without injury to the constitution.

It is very extraordinary, but not more extraordinary than true, that I have had very few cases of disease under this treatment, the subjects of which had not been cautioned against it by their medical attendants, and some even told that it would kill them ; and yet notwithstanding, I have not had one who has experienced even a single untoward effect from it ; nay, I have not had one who has not improved under the treatment, and very few who have not returned to their homes perfectly cured. In the depth of winter I have had patients lie hour after hour in the wet sheet (the reader will please bear in mind that they were enveloped closely in blankets also, and often with a bed over these in addition) and others perspire every morning, for weeks together, and when covered with perspiration, plunge immediately into the cold bath ; and in no case have I ever witnessed any but beneficial results. In many cases indeed, the patients themselves have felt astonished at the relief afforded. And these, be it remembered, were not common cases,—they were cases that had run the gauntlet of drug medication :—cases that had been prescribed for by physician after physician, both in town and country, till reduced to mere shadows of men, the subjects of them had arrived at that stage, when with Job they might exclaim, “ My bone cleaveth to my skin and to



my flesh, and I am escaped with the skin of my teeth."

The Water Cure, be it however observed, is dangerous in the hands of persons ignorant of the mechanism and physiology of the human frame ; but in the hands of those who should alone practise it, (I mean properly educated medical men) there is no danger—that is, if they have made themselves acquainted with the various ways of using the water. I have had patients of the respective ages of 65, 67, 70, 71, and 74, who have gone through what may be called the most active forms of the treatment,—the sweating succeeded by the plunge,—the wet sheet and the douche,—not only without danger, but with the most decided benefit. The danger lies not in the weapon, but in the want of skill in him who uses it.

A manifest crisis does not occur in every case, nor even in the majority of cases ; and when it does occur, it is in general an exceedingly mild affection. The crisis of boils and carbuncles in particular, about which so much has been said to frighten the weak, is not often obtained ; and when it does exist, can be rendered dangerous solely by great imprudence on the part of the patients, or mismanagement of the attendant. The only fatal termination succeeding to a crisis in this country was that of a patient who had imprudently left an establishment on the Rhine whilst labouring under it ; and who with still greater

imprudence on his arrival here, (the crisis having been considerably aggravated by travelling,) submitted himself to be treated with drugs. During a crisis nature's efforts are all tending to the exterior, and the exhibition of either dietetic or drug irritants at such a time, by determining an irritation to the interior, is most dangerous. "When" say Drs. Wilson and Gully, "during the treatment by water, no interference with the natural restorative process of the body (which the water cure calls so powerfully into play) is made, by the introduction into that body of stimulating food, stimulating liquids and of drugs, which are all irritating; when in addition, a crisis of boils or any other eruptions on the surface being produced, no drug medication is applied to them, but simple water alone; we assert that no danger whatever attends the treatment of disease by the water cure, nor that particular result of it denominated a crisis."

It has been said by its opponents, "The water treatment may cure, but the patient will soon relapse into his former state." I answer, Drugs will cure, but the patient will relapse still sooner into his former state. The fact is, a permanency to the cure of many complaints, (especially of those called chronic) by either drugs or water, can rarely be secured, but on condition that the patient live ever after, according to nature. And this patients schooled in Hydropathy almost always do; and as much from the comfort and pleasure de-

rivable therefrom, as from a conviction of its sovereign efficacy in preserving health. Strictly speaking, however, neither drugs nor water can cure disease; all that either can do, is to place the constitution in the most favourable state, to permit its inherent powers to effect its own restoration.

“We challenge,” say Drs. Wilson and Gully, “the medical fraternity to a discussion, as public as it can be made, of the whole subject of the comparative safety of the water and drug treatments, in their progress, and in their final consequences to the human constitution.” It may not be amiss here to quote the following from Dr. Copland’s excellent “Dictionary of Practical Medicine.” “A medical friend had gout in the lower extremities, for which he took a large dose of colchicum, before the morbid secretions had been evacuated. *He almost instantly had a violent attack of the disease in his stomach*, with simultaneous disappearance of it from the original seat. A middle-aged and not robust man, had most severe rheumatism in the thighs and legs, for which he took a large dose of croton oil; which produced hypercatharsis (excessive purging) and the complete cessation of the pains in the limbs, *followed* by the most distressing agony, referrible to the heart, with palpitations, &c. He was actively treated, but he died in a day or two.” Hundreds of such cases as these might easily be collected; and they show clearly the great danger of creating an

internal irritation at the same time that nature is concentrating every effort to cast the internal morbid mischief upon the external parts. In the cases just related, there was no water treatment on which to throw the blame, else upon the water treatment it certainly would have been thrown. If, however, the water cure, which aids nature powerfully in her conservative endeavour to transfer disease from the interior to the exterior of the body, be interfered with by drug irritants, the danger to the constitution will be as great as it was in the cases recorded by Dr. Copland.

It is indeed amusing to hear medical men cry out against the dangers of the water cure, when some of the most shining ornaments of the profession make no scruple to make known to the world that "the lancet and drugs have effected quite as much slaughter as the sword." "More infantile subjects" adds Dr. Reid, "are perhaps diurnally destroyed by the mortar and pestle, than in the ancient Bethlehem fell victims in one day to the Herodian massacre." "The file of every apothecary," adds another excellent authority, Dr. Paris, "would furnish a volume of instances, where the ingredients of the prescription are fighting together in the dark, or at least are so adverse to each other, as to constitute a most incongruous and chaotic mass." "We cannot reflect without astonishment," says the British and Foreign Medical Review for October, 1836,

“on the common and capricious employment of alkalies and of acids in medicine, so often prescribed with advantage, where it would, we suspect, puzzle the practitioner exceedingly to account for his own success.” “I visited,” says one of the most talented and experienced physicians in London,—Dr. Billing, “the different schools of medicine; and the students of each hinted, if they did not assert, that the other sects killed their patients.” Matthew Baillie, physician to George the Third, (and to George the Fourth, I believe also), after he had amassed a fortune by his profession, declared that “he had no faith in medicines whatever;”—that “he neither knew their manner of action, nor the principle which should direct him in the use of them;” or, in other words, that he had been steering all his life, without rudder or compass. Another physician to royalty—the late Sir William Knighton, observes, “It is somewhat strange, that though in many arts and sciences improvement has advanced in a step of regular progression from the first, in others it has kept no pace with time, and we look back to ancient excellence with wonder not unmixed with awe. Medicine seems to be one of those ill-fated arts whose improvement bears no proportion to its antiquity. This is lamentably true, although anatomy has been better illustrated, the materia medica enlarged, and chemistry better understood.” With truth

indeed may Dr. James Johnson say, "a considerable portion of the public are labouring under a prejudice, which is daily gaining ground, namely, that the present system of polypharmacy (complicated drugging) is injurious more frequently than beneficial." And when to this we add the following, from the British and Foreign Medical Review, for January, 1838, the public will be prepared to appreciate *the advantages* derivable from drugs. "Unless our information be very incorrect, *there are not* many prescriptions faithfully prepared in the British dominions. We believe there is scarcely a medicine, however simple, which the Chemist's art cannot imitate in cheap and base material." A list of the constitutions which have been ruined by mercury, and of the diseases that have been justly described by Pearson, Dieterich, Alley, Rayer, Travers, Cooper, and others, as the results of its use, would alone form a volume of no mean size, and one full alike of instruction and warning. The above candid confessions of men who had attained the highest eminence in their profession, should surely serve as lessons of humility to medical men; and create in them an anxiety to scrutinize rigidly any system, however wild and visionary it may at first sight appear, before they attempt to enter a protest against it.

In conclusion, I would earnestly exhort medical men to examine the system, and make them-

selves thoroughly acquainted with it before they join in the nonsensical hue and cry, raised by some of their confreres ; and which has proved but too plainly to the world, that whatever they may know on other subjects, their ignorance of Hydropathy is glaringly conspicuous ; which ignorance places them, whatever they may think to the contrary, in a very unenviable position. To all such I can confidently recommend the larger work of Dr.E. Johnson, as also those of Sir Chas. Scudamore, of Drs. Wilson and Gully, and the Rev. Mr. Abdy ; works which will, I feel confident, afford them both instruction and improvement.

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# APPENDIX.

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*Note A.—page 8.*

In the spring of 1842, I drew up the following testimony, and sent copies of it to fifty medical men, (several of first-rate eminence) requesting that if their opinions were in accordance, they would sign it; and out of that number, 44 appended their names. One of those who did not sign, as eminent a physician as any in London, returned for answer, that, "although in practice a rigid teetotaler, he must, for reasons which it is unnecessary to mention, be excused signing." Another, a surgeon of very great repute, replied—"I dare say that there is very little difference of opinion between us as to the use of spirituous or fermented liquors; but I have a great objection to sign general declarations of all kinds, and do not sign them, except under some very peculiar circumstances."

## THE TESTIMONY.

"We, the undersigned, are of opinion, that the healthful human constitution does not require the use of alcoholic liquors, but, on the contrary, that they are injurious; that no harm whatever, but rather benefit, results from their immediate and total abandonment; that to return to their use as *beverages* is an error, because contrary to the deductions of science, and will generally be found to inflict more or less injury on the system; besides hazarding, in all cases of previous habits of intemperance, a rekindling of the drunken appetite."



Of those who signed the above, several were of opinion that "it did not go far enough" (I am myself one of these), and that the following should have been added:—"We consider them unnecessary as medicines, inasmuch as every apothecary's shop contains medicines equally efficient, and whose exhibition would be followed by less injury to the constitution." Hydropathic practitioners have proved the correctness of the opinion, inasmuch as no hydropathist of respectability allows the use of any intoxicating liquor. They have proved more; they have shown that neither drug nor dietetic irritant is necessary to the restoration of health.

*Note B.—page 21.*

I have repeatedly seen the fever of intoxication speedily subdued, and much of its mischief prevented, by recourse to the same expedient. The following narrative, communicated to Dr. Currie, is in the words and on the respectable authority of Dr. Robertson, formerly Surgeon General of the Naval Hospital at Barbadoes. "A gentleman of this island, whose name was Weeks, a great votary of Bacchus, was in the habit, from fifteen to twenty years, of plunging into cold water when he rose from his bottle, and of actually going to sleep in a trough full of water, with his head supported on a kind of wooden pillow made for the purpose, above the surface. When he dined abroad, and had not the convenience of his own trough, he used to strip off his coat, waistcoat, and shirt, and sit exposed in the open air, and in that situation go to sleep, whether it rained or not. And sometimes he went and bathed in the nearest pond, to which he generally required assistance to be conveyed. The effect of this practice was, that instead of experiencing debility, lassitude, head-ach, and nausea, he found himself, on awaking, cheerful and refreshed, and free from all the effects of intoxication. In the year 1789, dining one day abroad, he got alternately drunk and sober three several times before midnight, each

time recovering his sobriety by immersing himself, and sleeping in cold water, and on awaking, returning to the company. The last time, after supper, he was so immoderately intoxicated, that he insisted on his companions undressing him, and carrying him themselves to the pond. They carried him accordingly in a chair, and set him up to the chin in water, where he continued upwards of an hour, a person supporting him. At home, however, he used, as I have already mentioned, a trough made for the purpose, with a bench in it as a pillow, having been nearly drowned when sleeping in his pond, from the negro who was appointed to watch him having himself fallen asleep. In this watery bed he would sleep one, two, three, or even more hours, experiencing always the greatest refreshment. His wife and family, when they wished him to change his quarters, used to draw out the plug, and let the water run off; when he awoke, and humourously complained of the loss of his bed clothes. At length this expedient began to lose its effect in rousing him, and on one occasion he continued to sleep in his empty trough. In consequence of this, he was seized with extreme rigours and chills, followed by a severe attack of rheumatism, which affected him a long time, and made him afterwards desist from the practice. But, to the end of his life, he was in the habit of sitting, when intoxicated, with his clothes open, and sometimes quite naked, exposed to the wind and rain. This extraordinary character died of apoplexy about three weeks ago, aged sixty-three."

OBSERVATIONS ON THE USE OF  
FLANNEL AND WARM CLOTHING.

(*Referred to, page 18.*)

The matter daily discharged by perspiration exceeds greatly the quantity of all the other secretions from the human body taken together ;—a fact which at once points out the necessity of endeavouring to maintain in a healthy state a function of such importance in the animal economy.

The habitual use of flannel worn next the skin, by maintaining its functions in a certain high temperature, diminishes the natural energy of its exhaling vessels, and renders them liable to become torpid by the slightest abstraction of their usual warmth; the common consequences of which are colds, rheumatism, and other complaints arising from checked perspiration, which much clothing is commonly but very erroneously supposed to prevent. Dr. Cheyne, than whom no man was better acquainted with the maladies of the feeble and the delicate, asserts that “much clothing debilitates the habit, and weakens the strength; and that *the custom of wearing flannel is almost as bad as a diabetes.*”

The lower the temperature at which the exhaling vessels of the skin are accustomed to perform their function, the less is the risk of their due action being interrupted by the vicissitudes of our climate; and, in the same proportion, is the danger of diseases originating from checked perspiration diminished. “A habit of uniformity,” as the celebrated John Hunter well observes, “in the application of heat and cold to an animal body, renders it more sensible of the smallest variation in either; while, by the habit of variety, it will become, in a proportionable degree, less susceptible of

all such sensations." This is proved every day, in cold weather, by people who are accustomed to clothe themselves warm. In them the exposure to cold air, although the effect produced on the skin is not, perhaps, the sixtieth part of a degree, immediately gives rise to the sensation of cold, even through the thickest covering. Those, on the contrary, who have been used to go thinly clothed can bear the variation of some degrees, without being sensible of it. The modern refinement of constructing houses so as almost wholly to exclude the external air; our thick carpets; and the heating of chambers by close stoves with narrow chimnies, are in direct opposition to this doctrine. But what benefit do we derive from the innovations? Are colds more rare, or consumptions less fatal? In vain do the delicate draw around them defences against the vicissitudes of temperature. Those who never sleep but on beds of down—who tread but on carpets—and take every precaution to shield themselves from the pure breath of heaven—are, of all other persons, the most puny, the most delicate, and the most liable to be disordered by the impression of cold; while a directly contrary mode of living destroys the susceptibility to atmospherical vicissitudes, and produces a degree of hardiness, or in other words, a state of the living system, which is not likely to be affected by atmospherical changes. A course of Hydropathic treatment would make such a change for the better, in poor enervated sufferers, (many of whom know not what it is to enjoy a day's health,) as they themselves could hardly believe. It would enable them to discard their flannels and their muffings with the greatest safety, as well as their idle luxurious habits, which are the actual cause of such sufferings. The treatment, and all its adjuvantia of diet, air, exercise, &c. lead back to nature, (whose steps they had forsaken,) and consequently to a restoration to health.

My patients invariably lay aside their flannel garments

before the tenth day of the treatment, and in no case have I known them catch cold, or experience any bad effect from the change. On the contrary, a better appetite, and a feeling of increased strength and buoyancy of spirits, are in most cases experienced. This indeed is the effect we might expect, if the theory of the greatest chemist in the world, the celebrated Liebig, be true; and that it *is* true we have reason to believe, not only from its having been adopted by the highest authorities, but from its consonance with experience. "Our clothing" says Liebig, "is merely an equivalent for a certain amount of food. The more warmly we are clad, the less urgent becomes the appetite for food; because the loss of heat by cooling, and consequently the amount of heat to be supplied by the food is diminished." Patients who arrived at my house, wrapt in flannels, destitute of appetite, pale and dejected, (many of whom I have allowed to speak for themselves in the foregoing pages) by the free use of water internally taken and externally applied, and by the disuse of their flannels and mufflings, have in a few days sprung as it were into new existence; their appetite restored, and all the functions duly performed.

Although the use of flannel is one of the evil practices of the day, it will not always be safe to leave it off entirely except this frame-hardening process—as it may be correctly termed—be previously entered upon; but thus fortified, either old or young may relinquish its use, both with safety and advantage.

# ADVERTISEMENT.

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## HYDROPATHIC ESTABLISHMENT,

RAMSGATE,

UNDER THE DIRECTION OF

A. COURTNEY, SURGEON, R.N.

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### Terms:

It must be obvious to every one, that the treatment differs widely in different individuals; some cases requiring nearly a double amount of time and attention to others. On these accounts I have thought it but right to vary the charges from Three to Four Guineas a week; which includes Board and Lodging and every expence, except the following articles, *necessary for Hydiatric use*, which the patient finds himself.

One pair of Long Blankets,  
One ditto Coarse Sheets,  
Six Coarse Towels,  
Linen for Bandages, *when required*.

For patients who prefer Lodging out of the Establishment, the charge is Two Guineas a week.

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N.B.—It is requested that all Communications on the Subject, be post paid, and in cases where a reply is expected, a stamp enclosed.

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